DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 091 613 CG 008 663

AUTHOR	Shelton, John L.; Corazzini, John G.
TITLE	The Art of Referral in a University Setting. Student Development Paper, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1972-74.
INSTITUTION	Colorado State Univ., Ft. Collins. Univ. Counseling Center.
PUB DATE	74
NOTE	18p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.75 HC-$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS	*College Students; *Counseling Effectiveness; Counselor Functions; Helping Relationship; *Referral; *Role Theory; State of the Art Reviews; *Student Personnel Services; Student Personnel Workers; Universities

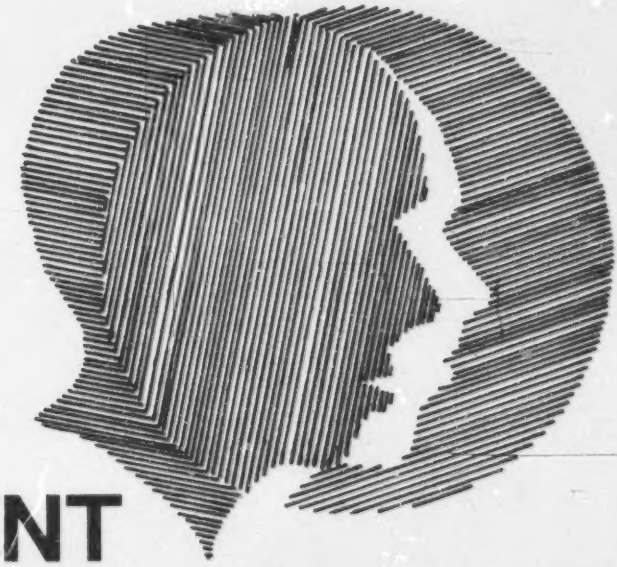
ABSTRACT

Although referral from one campus agency to another is common, little has been written about the process, and less effort expended evaluating it. Instead of viewing referral in a mechanistic manner, it is suggested that referral include a human factor and be seen as a "transfer of trust." The paper discusses the roles of the various participants in the referral process as well as several of its dimensions including: wholistic/atomistic, horizontal/vertical, and personal/institutional. Recommendations for the sending professional and agency training are included. (Author)

ED 091613

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

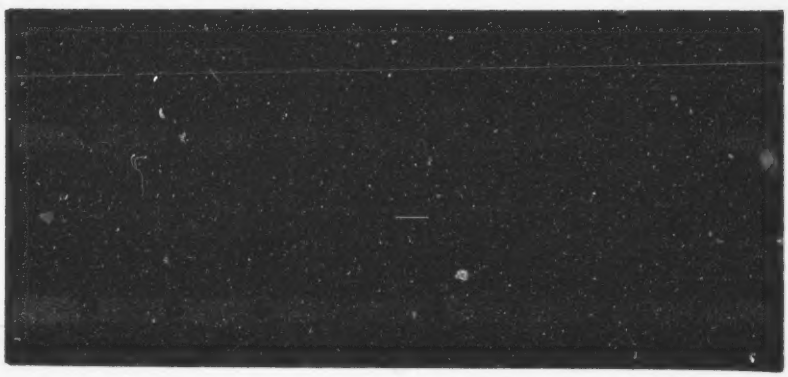
PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
JOHN SHELTON
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER



STUdENT DEVELOPMEnT SERiES

CG 008 663

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY



The Student Development Series is published by the University Counseling Center, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado 80521. It is directed to the interest of counselors, psychologists, and other student development professionals as well as administrators, faculty and students in higher education. Contributions to the Series are made by members of the Colorado State University community. The Series include Student Development Reports, which are reports of a research or program evaluation nature, and Student Development Staff Papers, which relate to theoretical or philosophical issues. A listing of prior Reports and Staff Papers is presented at the conclusion of this issue.

The cover depicts man's striving toward unity of personality, represented by the magic circle, or mandala.

ED 091613

THE AP. OF REFERRAL IN A UNIVERSITY SETTING

John L. Shelton John G. Corazzini

Colorado State University

Student Development Paper

Vol. IV, No. 1, 1972-74

Abstract

Although referral from one campus agency to another is common, there has been little written about the process and less effort expended evaluating it. Instead of viewing referral in a mechanistic manner, it is suggested that referral include a human factor and be seen as a "transfer of trust." The paper discusses the roles of the various participants in the referral process as well as several of its dimensions including: wholistic/atomistic, horizontal/vertical and personal/institutional. Recommendations for the sending professional and agency training are included.

The Art of Referral in a University Setting

Few situations present as much confusion, are more inefficient, and result in more unhappiness than the referral of students from one office to another on a college campus. Whether the student's problem be vocational, educational, or emotional, he is often faced with harried receptionists and long waiting lists, climaxed with overworked professionals who frequently can only utter "You are in the wrong place, you should be seeing Dr. Jones who is across campus." Given these conditions, is it any wonder that many students angrily condemn the administration for its "bureaucratic red tape" and, frequently, never arrive at the agency to which they have been referred.

The student is not alone in his resentment. Many nagging frustrations confront the college professor, residence hall assistant, or student personnel worker faced with having to make a referral. Their concerns frequently involve such questions as:

To whom should the referral be made?

How should the referral be made?

How can I insure that the student makes contact with the receiving agency?

What if the client is resistive to the referral?

Despite problems of this nature which are inherent in the referral process, few professionals receive any training on how to make a referral. Even more disturbing is the paucity of literature in the area. After a diligent search, these authors could find only four articles dealing directly with referral and none of these was an empirical study of the referral process.

The goal of this paper is to begin to close the gap between the overwhelming need for training and research in this area and the amount of preparation for the task available in professional training. More specifically,

the authors will offer a conceptualization of the referral process, bringing to light common problems, questions and predicaments facing student personnel professionals. Recommendations will then be made to enhance the professional's capacity to make effective referrals.

Referral - A conceptualization

For many students, referral results in feelings of frustration, rejection, or failure. Often times students have spent considerable time and expended great effort to establish contact with an agency they think appropriate to their needs. Whatever process may have been initiated, whether it be job placement in a career service agency, counseling in a counseling center or study-skill development in a learning lab, the mention of referral calls to mind many difficulties inherent in the process. Among these is getting to the initial agency in the first place. For many, the troubles encountered finding the initial agency coupled with the frustration resulting from having to seek the referrent agency leads to almost certain failure. Referral in these instances is usually the end of a relationship and results in an end to the problem solving process the student had initiated.

One reason why this process is so ineffective is that advising or counseling, as practiced by many, is atomistic. The atomistic referral process is characterized by an "out of sight, out of mind" philosophy which result in referral having one goal--getting rid of the client. Contrasted with this approach is a wholistic orientation which demands that referral be a process which includes a human dimension. Such a process considers first the client's needs, rather than those of the sending professional who may be eager to quickly conclude his contact with the client. Referral, in the latter sense, becomes a "transfer of trust."

Most conceptualizations of referral consider it to be an atomistic process. For example, Shertzer and Stone (1968, p 433) state that "referral is the act of transferring an individual to another person or agency for

specialized assistance not available from the original source." According to this definition the reason for referral should be for specialized service a professional cannot or chooses not to give. This standard definition, however, lacks a human factor which would transform the mere transfer of a "case" to a referral which can become a "transfer of trust."

During a wholistic referral the trust between the referring individual and client is also referred. For example, the student's accumulated trust for his RA is part of the referral process. That is, when the student is referred to an agency such as Psychological Services, his trust for the RA provides a bridge to promote trust for the agency. It is this "bridging" that facilitates the referral process. This referral is not a mechanistic process, but one where both individuals demonstrate and act on their respect for the other. In this instance, the trust is transferred so as to guarantee the integrity of each party concerned. Referral in this sense is a humanistic process of guiding a client toward that source which will be most productive. Thus, a referral process built on a transfer of trust becomes a procedure for taking and heightening responsibility rather than abdicating it.

Further conceptualization of the referral process demands an examination of the role played by each of the three participants. (1) The referent is a client working with a student personnel worker who needs the unique skills of an alternative professional. (2) The sending professional is that professional or paraprofessional currently responsible for the client, who for one reason or another finds himself unable to meet a specific need presented by this client at this time. (3) The receiving professional is that individual who is ready to accept major responsibility for the client and is thought competent to meet the current specific need of this client. Looking once more to the example pertaining to the residence hall, the student would be the referent, the resident assistant would be the sending

paraprofessional, and the person in Psychological Services that works with the student would be the receiving professional.

Positive feelings about the referral process are maximized when the referent and the sending professional each take responsibility for their part in the referral process. Thus, in some cases the referent and the sending professional might negotiate who the receiving professional will be. As a result, the referral becomes a joint endeavor in which the client can voice his feelings about a particular action.

A referral in which the client actively engages in the process can be called a horizontal referral. Contrasted with horizontal referral is one which is vertical. For example, traditional referral based on a medical model is vertical: a physician tells the patient to go to a specialist for treatment of an allergy. The sending professional in this case is seen as another authority and the client usually has little or no part in the decision whether to be referred, why, and to whom. Horizontal referral, on the other hand, actively engages the referent in the referral process. Since the referral concerns the referent he is expected to make inputs regarding the who, what, and why of the referral. In this dimension the client's values and sensitivities are best safeguarded.

Finally, referral can be either institutional or personal. An institutional referral is one in which the client is sent to an agency with minimal chance to make a viable connection with that agency. This is usually characterized by a statement such as "Why don't you go over to Student Health, they will take care of you." On the other hand, a personal referral is one in which the referent is given a contact person and a means for contacting him. "I have called Dr. Jones at your request; he will see you at 3 p.m. today. His office is Room 107 of Student Health." A personal referral made to a specific receiving professional with directions to the

person's office, appointment time, etc., is by far the better referral method when measured in terms of client satisfaction and number of referred appointments kept.

Recommendations

Based on the conceptualization of referral presented above, the authors propose a series of recommendations for improving the referral process.

(1) Establish role definitions. The first recommendation considers the importance of role definitions. A crucial first step in the referral process is to define the professional's role. This is especially true of referrals devoid of a long standing positive relationship between the referent and the sending professional, as is the case with the majority of referrals made on a college campus. As a result it frequently becomes expenditious for the professional to define for the client the limitations and purpose of his or her role. If, for example, the professional's job is to be primarily a referral source, the client should be told this fact immediately; e.g., "My job is to determine who you should see within our agency. I may not be the person that you will eventually be working with. Now tell me, what brings you here." The advantage of this approach is that the client's expectations are altered immediately to conform with the fact that he will be referred to another person.

Contrast this with the student who comes in to an agency assuming that the person with whom he is talking will be the primary help-giving agent and discusses some problem or dilemma. After concluding his remarks he discovers to his chagrin that he is being referred to yet another person to whom he must retell his story.

(2) Establish a positive expectation. Recent research by Goldstein, (1962), Brunner (1965), Biddle (1964) has indicated that positive expectations in therapy and teaching are important variables in predicting

successful outcomes. Likewise, positive expectation has an impact on the referral process as well. As a result the sending professional should endeavor to create a favorable cognitive set that the referent can carry that with him to the receiving professional: "Dr. Jones has helped many students with problems like yours; I think he is very competent." Needless to say, whatever is said about the receiving professional should be an honest and accurate assessment of that person's strengths. Thus, an obligation of the sending professional is to know the receiving professional. As Wygant (1971) has admonished, the professional's credibility as a referral source can best be safeguarded by making referrals only to respected clinics and individuals.

(3) Training. Along these same lines of reasoning, one of the best ways to facilitate the referral process is to provide training for those most intimately involved. This is especially true in a university setting. Ramey (1962) and Cantoni and Cantoni (1965) have echoed Wygant's assertion concerning the importance of knowing the referral sources. They have also stressed the difficulty in achieving this end. As a result, it is suggested that an agency conduct a yearly "referral bazaar." Held during the fall, this workshop would serve to introduce campus professionals to the names, phone numbers and specializations of various persons in receiving agencies.

Further contact should be encouraged with those agencies which have the heaviest interagency referral traffic so that personal friendships and professional relationships can be established. This workshop, if properly conducted, would serve to increase the referral sources known by each potential sender, and as the quality of the interactions increased, the possibilites of the sending professional matching the client's needs with the receiving professional's skills would be heightened.

(4) The sending professional's remarks should be concrete and personal. In this respect the sending professional should strive to be as concrete as

possible when making the referral; for example, including the receiving professional's name, his location, phone number, and hours of practice. One way of virtually making sure that the client reaches the receiving professional is to make an appointment for the client in his presence and perhaps allow the two to converse briefly before concluding the conversation. In some cases the client needing mental health services should be taken to the proper agency to insure his arrival.

Referral to private agencies or individuals within those agencies should not be done without the client's knowledge, consent and cooperation. Thus, an honest, open approach with the client is crucial. "Dr. Jones in the counseling center is a specialist in these types of problems and he has helped many students. What do you think of this suggestion?"

If the client does not wish to be referred. In some instances it becomes apparent that the client resents being referred and will not likely seek out the receiving professional even if an appointment is made. In this case another professional can be suggested or the sending professional may wish to discuss the client's feelings towards referral. Often a few minutes spent in catharsis will free the client to the point where he will wish to seek help from another professional. In some instances the receiving professional may wish to contact the client for reassurance and encouragement. Of course, despite all good intentions, the client's resistance may make referral impossible, although the passage of time will occasionally result in a change in the client's attitude. The important notion for the reader's consideration is that, except for emergency cases, referral is most effective when based on a joint decision within the horizontal model.

The importance of follow-up. Once the referral has been made, most senders adopt the philosophy "out of sight, out of mind." Herein lies one of the greatest errors frequently made in the referral process. The competent

professional should call the referral agency or individual and ask for feedback on the referral process. Such questions as "Was the appointment kept? Did I give you the information needed?" are crucial questions that must be answered.

Bibliography

Biddle, B. J. The integration of teacher effectiveness research. In B. J. Biddle & W. J. Ellena (Eds.) Contemporary Research on Teacher Effectiveness. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1964.

Brunner, J. S. The growth of mind. American Psychologist, 1965, 20, 1007-1017.

Cantoni, L. J. & Cantoni, Lucile. Making referrals to professional counselors. Education, 1965, 85(7), 437-438.

Goldstein, A. P. Therapist-patient expectancies in psychotherapy. New York: Pergamon, 1962.

Ramsey, G. V. The referral task in counseling. The Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1962, 40, 443-447.

Shertzer, B. & Stone, S. Fundamentals of Counseling. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1968.

Wygant, W. E. The problem of mental health referral. Pastoral Psychology, 1971, 22, 41-45.

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT REPORTS

REVISED INDEX - November, 1969

Volume I, 1963-64

Ivey, A. E. & Miller, C. D. A Study of Student Reactions to Welcome Week, 1963-64, I, 1.

Ivey, A. E. & Miller, C. D. Freshman Class Profile, 1964, I, 2.

Ivey, A. E. The Colorado State University Student (A Comparative Study of High School Rank and CEEB-SAT Scores), 1964, I, 3.

Ivey, A. E. Student Perceptions of Colorado State University, 1964, I, 4.

Goldstein, A. D. & Miller, C. D. Educational and Vocational Background of Parents of Colorado State University Students, I, 5.

Volume II, 1964-65

Ivey, A. E. & Miller, C. D. Scholastic Ability Patterns of Colorado State University Freshmen Entering Fall 1963, 1964, II, 1.

Miller, C. D. Scholastic Ability Patterns of CSU Freshmen Entering Fall 1964. 1965, II, 2.

Ivey, A. E. & Miller, C. D. The Academic Performance of Student's Ranking in the Fourth Sixth of CSU's Freshmen Class. 1965, II, 3.

Volume III, 1965-66

Keist, R. T. A Study to Determine if Students Living in a Residence Hall With Community Bathrooms Participated in More Activities and Have More Interaction With Members of Their Living Units Than Students Who Live in a Residence Hall With Private Bathrooms. 1965, III, 1.

Miller, C. D. Scholastic Achievement Patterns of Colorado State University Freshmen. 1966, III, 2.

Miller, C. D., Ivey, A. E., & Goldstein, A. Colorado State University Student Economic Patterns: A Financial Survey. 1966, III, 3.

Rietsma, G. Areas of Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction With Colorado State University as Perceived by Students. 1966, III, 4.

Keist, R. T. Validation Study: Student Interaction in Residence Halls With or Without Community Bathrooms. 1966, III, 5.

Schoemer, J. R. An Analysis of the 1966 Summer Orientation Program at CSU. 1966, III, 6.

Volume IV, 1966-67

Office of the Dean of Men. Summary of Transfer and Reference Evaluations. 1966, IV, 1.

Volume IV, 1966-67 (Con't.)

Cole, C. W. & Ivey, A. E. Differences Between Students Attending and Not Attending a Pre-College Orientation. 1966, IV, 2.

Crookston, B. B., Keist, R. T., Miller, C. D. & Ivey, A. E. A Study of Attitudes Concerning University Relationships with Students: Part I: A Summary Report of Five Populations. 1966, IV, 3.

Gabbert, K. H., Ivey, A. E. & Miller, C. D. Counselor Assignment and Client Attitude. 1967, IV, 4.

Keist, R. T., Ivey, A. E. & Miller, C. D. A Study of Attitudes Concerning University Relationships with Students. 1967, IV, 5.

Keist, R. T. A Study of Enculturation Patterns of First Quarter Freshmen at CSU. 1967, IV, 6.

Ivey, A. E. & Miller, C. D. Student Response to Three Types of Orientation Programs. 1967, IV, 7.

Volume V, 1967-68

Early, E. J. F., Johnson, D. D., Morrill, W. H. & Oetting, E. R. A Comparison of the Meaning of Names Used to Describe a Modern College of Agriculture. 1968, V, 1.

Schoemer, J. R. Class of 1970 - This is Your Potrait. 1968, V. 2.

Volume VI, 1968-69

McConnell, W. A. & Schoemer, J. R. Is There a Case for the Freshmen Women Residence Hall? 1968, VI, 1.

Crookston, B. B. A Survey of Student Participation in Academic Departmental Affairs. 1968, VI, 2.

Hurst, J. C. & Schoemer, J. R. An Attitude Assessment of Students and Their Parents Who Did and Did Not Attend Preview CSU 1968. 1969, VI, 3.

Hurst, J. C., Hubbell, R. N., Munsey, W. L., Penn, J. R., & Harding, K. A Survey of Student and Parent Attitudes Concerning Colorado State University. 1969, VI, 4.

Hubbell, R. N., Munsey, W. L., Nutt, J. A., & Penn, J. R. An Annotated Bibliography of Research Done at Colorado State University Concerning Student Life. 1969, VI, 5.

Forrest, D., Moore, M., & Hinkle, J. Married Student Outreach Programs Completed During the 1968-69 Academic Year at Colorado State University.

Volume VII, 1969-70

Crookston, B. B. & Hubbell, R. N. A Follow-up Study of Student Participation in Departmental Academic Affairs at Colorado State University. 1969, VII, 1.

Volume VII, 1969-70 (Con't.)

Morrill, W. H., Miller, C. D. & Thomas, L. E. The Relationship of Educational and Vocational Interests of Women Students at Colorado State University. 1969, VII, 2.

Hurst, J. C., Munsey, W. L. & Penn, J. R. Student and Parent Attitudes Before and After One Quarter at Colorado State University. 1969-70, VII, 3.

Hubbell, R. N., Sjogren, D. D. & Boardman, T. The Generation Gap: Parent and Student Perceptions of the University. 1969-70, VII, 4.

Dildine, G., Hubbell, R. N., Keltz, R. & Smith, T. A Collegiate Experiment in Human Relations Training: The CSU Student Leadership Workshop of April 1969. 1969-70, VII, 5.

Hurst, J. C. & Smith, T. Student-Parent Perceptions of CSU Before and After Attendance at Preview CSU 1969. 1969-70, VII, 6.

Carlson, J. Bibliography on Drugs. 1969-70, VII, 7.

Hurst, J. C. & Morrill, W. H. Personal vs General Requests for Client Feedback in the Evaluation of Counseling Services. 1969-70, VII, 8.

Volume VIII, 1970-71

Morrill, W. H. & Hoyt, D. P. The Training of Counseling Psychologists for Outreach Activities. 1970-71, VIII, 1.

Birney, D., Thomas, L. E. & Hinkle, J. Life Planning Workshops: Discussion and Evaluation. 1970-71, VIII, 2.

Kuder, J. M. & Smith, T. The Leaving Student at Colorado State University, 1970-71, VIII, 3.

Weigel, R. G. & Smith, T. Effects of Pre-PREVIEW Information Mailings on Academic Choices and Performance, 1970-71, VIII, 4.

Layton, K. & Gardiner, J. C. Justifications for Calling in National Guard Troops During a Campus Demonstration: A Study of Student Attitudes. 1970-71, VIII, 5.

Volume IX, 1971-72

Hurst, J. C., Delworth, U. & Garriott, R. The Effects on Participant Self-Concept of a Pre-Recorded Audio Tape in Self-Directed Encounter Groups, 1971-72, IX, 1.

Morrill, W. H. & Hyne, S. What to Prevent and Promote, 1971-72, IX, 2.

Titley, R. W. & Vattano, F. J. Psychology as a "Major" Step, 1971-72, IX, 3.

Coates, Carolie J. Floor Social Climate Factors in Varying Residence Hall Living Arrangements, 1971-72, IX, 4.

Volume X, 1972-73

Coates, Carolie, J., and Hall, Raymond L. Comparison of Academic Predictors and Achievement for Project GO and Regularly Admitted Freshmen at Colorado State University, 1968-71. 1973, X, 1.

Coates, Carolie, J., Hurst, James, C., and Becker, Wayne. College Students' Perceptions of Problems and Sources of Help. 1973, X, 2.

Huebner, Lois, Morrill, Weston, and Hinkle, John. Client Transaction with a University Counseling Center. 1973, X, 3.

Hadson, Dennis, L., Kuder, James, M., and Thompson, Tom, T. A Longitudinal Study of Changes in Satisfaction of Residence Hall Students. 1973, X, 4.

Hotchkiss, C. W., & Morrill, W. H. What's in a Name? A Study of Student Personnel Titles. 1972-73, X, 5.

Volume XI, 1973-1974

Hyne, Susan Ann. Innovations in Vocational Counseling: A Review of Program Descriptions 1973-74, XI, 1.

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENT DEVELOPMENT STAFF PAPERS

Volume I, 1969-70

Crookston, B. B. Implications of Drug Usage for Higher Education. 1969-70, I, 1.

Crookston, B. B. Coping with Campus Disruption. 1969-70, I, 2.

Carlson, J. M. The Elements of Conflict. 1969-70, I, 3.

Volume II, 1970-71

Carlson, J. M. & Hubbell, R. N. The Future of College Discipline. 1970-71, II, 1.

Crookston, B. B. A Developmental View of Academic Advising. 1970-71, II, 2.

Morrill, W. H. & Hurst, J. C. A Preventative and Developmental Role for the College Counselor. 1970-71, II, 3.

Crookston, B. B. & Carlson, J. M. Third Party Mediation on Campus. 1970-71, II, 4.

Hubbell, R. N. & Sherwood, G. P. A Model for Developing New Residence Hall Environments. 1970-71, II, 5.

Volume III, 1971-72

Ivey, A. E. & Hurst, J. C. Communication as Adaptation. 1971-72, III, 1.

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT SERIES

1973-1974 Editorial Board

Editor	Weston H. Morrill
Associate Editors	John G. Corazzini Courtlyn Hotchkiss Lois Huebner James C. Hurst Thomas T. Smith

Copyright Information

Copyright to materials published in the Student Development Series is not held by the Series or Colorado State University. Copyright privileges are retained by each author for his own contribution. Permission for quotation or reproduction should be addressed to the author in question.